

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 24, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leaders McConnell, Schumer, Ryan, and Pelosi:

We write to express our support for Sec. 2201 of the Senate-passed Opioid Crisis Response Act of 2018, and strongly encourage you to include this provision in the final legislative package currently being negotiated to address the ongoing addiction crisis.

This provision would recognize residential pediatric recovery facilities as providers under Medicaid, and allow certain health care services provided to infants with neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) in those facilities to be covered by Medicaid. Additionally, the provision clarifies that infants who receive services from these facilities can continue to do so after they reach one year of age, and authorizes residential pediatric recovery centers to offer counseling or referrals for services, activities to encourage caregiver-infant bonding, and training on caring for infants to family members or other caregivers. This provision is based on the Caring Recovery for Infants and Babies (CRIB) Act (H.R. 6004 and S. 2899), which enjoys bipartisan support in both houses of Congress.

NAS is a condition in which an infant experiences withdrawal from an addictive substance to which he or she has been exposed *in utero*. NAS is most often caused by the taking of opioids during pregnancy, and studies have shown that instances of NAS have tripled in the past decade. Infants born with NAS are typically treated in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), but with its bright lights and loud noises, the NICU is not always the most appropriate place for babies with NAS to receive care. Treating infants with NAS in the NICU is also expensive and costs can run more than five times those of treating other newborns.

Residential pediatric recovery facilities offer an alternative to the NICU for babies with NAS, where infants can receive specialized care in a setting more conducive to recovery. But under current law, these facilities are ineligible for reimbursement under Medicaid. Passage of the CRIB Act will ensure infants and their caregivers are able to receive the care they need in the environment that best meets their needs.

As we seek to address the needs of those suffering from the opioid crisis, it is crucial that we take action to protect this epidemic's most vulnerable victims. We believe that allowing residential pediatric recovery facilities to be eligible for reimbursement under Medicaid for the services they provide to infants with NAS through Sec. 2201 will allow more babies and their families to attain the care they need, and we urge you to ensure its inclusion in the final legislative package currently under negotiations.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this critical public health issue.

Sincerely,



Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator



Evan Jenkins  
United States Representative